

# 1 Samuel 21 - Thursday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014

- Last week in chapter twenty, we left David parting ways with his loyal friend Jonathan, never to see him again for the remainder of his life.
- This because, Jonathan, though giving his father, King Saul, the benefit of the doubt, realized beyond a shadow of a doubt, his evil intent.
- Namely, that of doing everything, and stopping at nothing in order to kill David, whom he deemed a threat to his and his son's reign as king.

(1) Now David came to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. And Ahimelech was afraid when he met David, and said to him, "Why *are* you alone, and no one is with you?"

- Right out of the shoot, this verse presents a couple of questions, the first of which is, why David goes to Ahimelech in Nob in the first place.
- The second question is, why is Ahimelech so afraid, that he is trembling as he meets David whom he obviously knows is Saul's son in law?
- First, to the question of why David goes there in the first place, I would suggest that it was the safest and the fastest place he could get to.

- Nob was the fastest place to get to because it was close in proximity to Jerusalem, which was only about three miles away from the city.
- Nob was the safest place to get to because it was the city of priests, such that was a place of worship and sanctuary in their service to God.
- The reason I point this out is that often times, the best thing we can do is get to our city of priests, as it were, as quickly as we possibly can.

Charles Spurgeon - "David being driven away by Saul from the prophet Saul fled at once to the priests. He loved the servants of god and would not leave their company. ...Seeing David alone, and evidently in distress, Ahimelech suspected something wrong."

- This brings us to our second question of why Ahimelech was so afraid suspecting something must be wrong when David came there alone.
- The reason is that he knew who David was and as such, someone of this importance and prominence wouldn't travel without an entourage.
- Another reason Ahimelech was so afraid may have had to do with such an important man looking so weary and probably discombobulated.

- This seems to indicate Ahimelech, as of yet, was unaware of what had transpired between Saul and David in that Saul wanted David dead.
- Sadly, as we'll see next instead of David telling Ahimelech the truth about what had actually happened, he tells him a lie he'll always regret.
- In the next chapter, 22, we'll see David's unspeakable regret after he realizes that he caused the death of 85 priests and countless others.

(2) So David said to Ahimelech the priest, "The king has ordered me on some business, and said to me, 'Do not let anyone know anything about the business on which I send you, or what I have commanded you.' And I have directed *my* young men to such and such a place.

- It's important to understand that had David told Ahimelech the truth, he would have in effect, saved his, the priests, and the people's lives.
- The reason being is, after providing David with food and a weapon, they could have been prepared knowing Saul would come to kill them.
- The point being is David's lie, which was absolutely unnecessary, jeopardized the lives of so many putting them at a perilous disadvantage.

One commentator of this wrote, "Some go about to excuse David's lying here: but that cannot be. The consequences of it were very sad . . . and afterward made his soul melt for very heaviness."

Charles Surgeon takes it further by way of application to our lives writing, "Here 'David spoke falsely and his error is recorded not his honor, but for our warning. This sad falsehood led to terrible consequences. O that good men could always trust in the Lord.'"

(3) Now therefore, what have you on hand? Give *me* five *loaves* of bread in my hand, or whatever can be found." (4) And the priest answered David and said, "*There is* no common bread on hand; but there is holy bread, if the young men have at least kept themselves from women." (5) Then David answered the priest, and said to him, "Truly, women *have been* kept from us about three days since I came out. And the vessels of the young men are holy, and *the bread is* in effect common, even though it was consecrated in the vessel this day." (6) So the priest gave him holy *bread*; for there was no bread there but the showbread which had been taken from before the LORD, in order to put hot bread *in its place* on the day when it was taken away.

- Bear with me for just a bit because these verses will require some explanation as to what's happening here before we can understand this.
- First, the table of showbread in the Tabernacle was to always be fresh before the Lord, to be eaten in the presence of, and with, the Lord.
- Actually, we saw the significance of the Table of Show Bread in our study about the Tabernacle back in the book of Leviticus chapter 24.

- Another piece of information that's germane to our understanding of this is that the priests were not the only ones who could partake of this.
- Also, it required those eating it to be ceremonially clean, which is why Ahimelech asks David if he had at least kept himself from a woman.
- It's interesting to note that David gave Ahimelech the impression that he was travelling with a group of young men when he really wasn't.

- Here's where I'm going with all of this while Ahimelech didn't actually break any of God's laws he did in fact break with the priestly customs.
- As such, there's an important lesson we can learn from what Ahimelech did by allowing David to eat of the old bread though not a priest.
- More specifically, the traditions and customs of man should never override the holy Word of God. So important is this, Jesus refers to this.

Luke 6:1-5 NIV One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and his disciples began to pick some heads of grain, rub them in their hands and eat the kernels. (2) Some of the Pharisees asked, "Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?" (3) Jesus answered them, "*Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? (4) He entered the house of God, and taking the consecrated bread, he ate what is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions.*" (5) Then Jesus said to them, "*The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.*"

(7) Now a certain man of the servants of Saul *was* there that day, detained before the LORD. And his name *was* Doeg, an Edomite, the chief of the herdsmen who *belonged* to Saul. (8) And David said to Ahimelech, "Is there not here on hand a spear or a sword? For I have brought neither my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste." (9) So the priest said, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in the Valley of Elah, there it is, wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. If you will take that, take *it*. For *there is* no other except that one here." And David said, "*There is* none like it; give it to me."

- Notice how that David, who is in the fight of his life, and the fight for his life turns to the carnal weaponry in order to fight this spiritual battle.
- Lest we be too hard on David, we would probably do well to note that this Edomite named Doeg is not our friend, even though he is there.
- If you're anything like me, you are probably wondering where the David that slew Goliath is right about now, because he wouldn't do this.

One commentator said it best this way, "It is painful to the last degree to see one whose faith towered to such a lofty height in the encounter with Goliath, coming down from that noble elevation, to find him resorting for self-protection to the lies and artifices of an impostor."

Allan Redpath fills in some blanks when he wrote; "David lost confidence in God and in fulfillment of God's purpose for his life which had been revealed to him. He went to God's house for comfort and help and guidance, but he was detected as being wrong in his soul. Instead of acknowledging the truth to the only one who could help him and confessing that he had been telling a lie, he ran for his life again."

(10) Then David arose and fled that day from before Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath. (11) And the servants of Achish said to him, "Is this not David the king of the land? Did they not sing of him to one another in dances, saying: 'Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands'?" (12) Now David took these words to heart, and was very much afraid of Achish the king of Gath. (13) So he changed his behavior before them, pretended madness in their hands, scratched on the doors of the gate, and let his saliva fall down on his beard. (14) Then Achish said to his servants, "Look, you see the man is insane. Why have you brought him to me? (15) Have I need of madmen, that you have brought this fellow to play the madman in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house?"

- Why pray tell does David go to the very city that Goliath was from? Furthermore, why does he go wielding the very sword belonging to him?
- Perhaps he surmised that he would be safe there, such that Saul, who was so afraid of Goliath in the valley of Elah, would not follow him.
- Maybe he felt safer amongst the enemy than his own people, or it may be that he thought they wouldn't recognize him, or Goliath's sword.

- Unfortunately, David quickly learns, they not only know him, they realize he's the one responsible for killing the tens of thousands of them.
- In other words, this is the David that killed their countryman. I suppose you could say that David can now rightly assume he is a dead duck.
- It's for this reason he realizes he better do something and do it now, which is why he pretends to be mad drooling and scratching the doors.

- By the way, where do you think David learned how to feign insanity? I'm of the belief that he learned this from none other than Saul himself.
- It's important to note that the thought in that day was if anyone mistreated someone who was insane the god's wouldn't take kindly to them.
- Be that as it may, this brings up the question of where did David get the idea to feign madness in order to be delivered from the Philistines?

- I would submit God gave him this in that very moment because David humbled himself in repentance before the Lord and sought the Lord.
- The reason I believe that is because of what David wrote about what happened there in two Psalms, Psalm thirty-four and Psalm fifty-six.
- Actually, it's the additional details in both of these Psalms that can serve as a reminder of God's grand and glorious grace in spite of failure.

**Psalms 34:1-22 NKJV A Psalm of David When He Pretended Madness Before Abimelech, Who Drove Him Away, and He Departed.** I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth. (2) My soul shall make its boast in the LORD; The humble shall hear *of it* and be glad. (3) Oh, magnify the LORD with me, And let us exalt His name together. (4) I sought the LORD, and He heard me, And delivered me from all my fears. (5) They looked to Him and were radiant, And their faces were not ashamed. (6) This poor man cried out, and the LORD heard *him*, And saved him out of all his troubles. (7) The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them. (8) Oh, taste and see that the LORD *is* good; Blessed *is* the man *who* trusts in Him! (9) Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints! *There is* no want to those who fear Him. (10) The young lions lack and suffer hunger; But those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good *thing*. (11) Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD. (12) Who *is* the man *who* desires life, And loves *many* days, that he may see good? (13) Keep your tongue from evil, And your lips from speaking deceit. (14) Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it. (15) The eyes of the LORD *are* on the righteous, And His ears *are open* to their cry. (16) The face of the LORD *is* against those who do evil, To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. (17) *The righteous* cry out, and the LORD hears, And delivers them out of all their troubles. (18) The LORD *is* near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit. (19) Many *are* the afflictions of the righteous, But the LORD delivers him out of them all. (20) He guards all his bones; Not one of them is broken. (21) Evil shall slay the wicked, And those who hate the righteous shall be condemned. (22) The LORD redeems the soul of His servants, And none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned.

**Psalms 56:1-13 NKJV To the Chief Musician. Set to "The Silent Dove in Distant Lands." a Michtam of David When the Philistines Captured Him in Gath.** Be merciful to me, O God, for man would swallow me up; Fighting all day he oppresses me. (2) My enemies would hound *me* all day, For *there are* many who fight against me, O Most High. (3) Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You. (4) In God (I will praise His word), In God I have put my trust; I will not fear. What can flesh do to me? (5) All day they twist my words; All their thoughts *are* against me for evil. (6) They gather together, They hide, they mark my steps, When they lie in wait for my life. (7) Shall they escape by iniquity? In anger cast down the peoples, O God! (8) You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; *Are they* not in Your book? (9) When I cry out *to You*, Then my enemies will turn back; This I know, because God *is* for me. (10) In God (I will praise *His* word), In the LORD (I will praise *His* word), (11) In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? (12) Vows *made* to You *are* binding upon me, O God; I will render praises to You, (13) For You have delivered my soul from death. *Have You* not *kept* my feet from falling, That I may walk before God In the light of the living?

#### 7 THINGS THAT WORRY AND FEAR CAN AND CANNOT DO

- 1) Worry and fear can dominate our decision making process
- 2) Worry and fear can give way to lies to protect ourselves
- 3) Worry and fear can cause us to default to the ways of the world
- 4) Worry and fear can create a trap coming from the fear of man

- 5) Worry and fear can lead to ungodly and irrational behavior
- 6) Worry and fear can bring harm and peril to those around us
- 7) Worry and fear can not have the final word in our lives